CREDITING SOUP

in the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) School Nutrition Programs

The meal pattern for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP) requires weekly servings of five vegetable subgroups that include dark green, red/orange, beans/peas (legumes), starchy and other. In addition to the five subgroups, the lunch meal pattern includes another category of "additional" vegetables that are required to meet the minimum weekly amounts for each grade group. "Additional" vegetables can come from any subgroup. For more information, see the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) handout, *Vegetable Subgroups,* and the CSDE's *Menu Planning Guide for School Meals*

Soups must meet specific requirements to credit toward the vegetables component. Vegetable soups **made from scratch** credit based on the actual amount of each vegetable subgroup per serving. Menu planners must document this information with a standardized soup recipe, based on the yields in the USDA's *Food Buying Guide for School Meal Programs.* Recipes must contain at least ⅛ cup of vegetables per serving (the minimum creditable amount) to credit toward part of the vegetables component.

Only certain types of **commercial** vegetable soups credit toward the vegetables component. Lentil, pea and bean soups credit as the **bean/peas (legumes)** subgroup. A 1-cup serving credits as **½ cup** of legumes. All other allowable commercial vegetable soups credit only as **"additional"** vegetables. A 1-cup serving credits as **¼ cup** of "additional" vegetables.

Commercial beef barley, chicken or turkey noodle and chicken or turkey rice soups do not credit toward any meal pattern component. The chart below lists allowable commercial vegetable soups.

Allowable Commercial Soups	
"Additional" Vegetables *	**Legumes ****
Minestrone Tomato Tomato with other basic components such as rice Vegetable (contains only vegetables) Vegetable with other basic components such as meat or poultry	Lentil Pea, e.g., split pea Bean, e.g., black bean, mixed bean
* Based on the *Food Buying Guide*, 1 cup of commercial vegetable soup credits as ¼ cup of "additional" vegetables. These soups cannot credit toward any other vegetable subgroup unless the manufacturer provides a PFS with specific documentation on the amount of vegetables per serving from each subgroup. ** Based on the *Food Buying Guide*, 1 cup of commercial lentil, pea and bean soup credits as ½ cup of the beans/peas (legumes) subgroup.	

Commercial soups vary greatly in how they are made. To credit a commercial soup product differently from the yields in the *Food Buying Guide,* menu planners must obtain a PFS from the manufacturer stating the specific contribution of all vegetables toward the vegetable subgroups. The manufacturer's PFS must provide the information specified in the USDA's *Product Formulation Statement for Documenting Vegetables and Fruits.* **Schools cannot use any other type of manufacturer product information such as sales literature or product specification sheets to document the meal pattern requirements for the vegetable subgroups.** These materials do not provide the specific crediting information that is required on a PFS.

The chart below shows an example of product information that lists the vegetable subgroup contribution for each soup, but does not meet the documentation requirements for school nutrition programs.

Sample Product Information for Soup							
Product UPC Code	**Description**	**Vegetable Subgroup Contribution (Cups)**					
		Dark Green	**Red/ Orange**	**Beans/Peas (Legumes)**	**Starchy**	**Other**	**Total**
0-00000-00000-0	Tomato Soup, canned		½				½
0-00000-00001-0	Vegetable Soup, canned		⅛		⅛		¼
0-00000-00002-0	Minestrone Soup, canned		¼			⅛	³/₈

This information is not a PFS and does not provide the specific contribution of all vegetables toward the vegetable subgroups. For example, the company information indicates that tomato soup provides **½ cup of the red/orange vegetable subgroup**. Based on the *Food Buying Guide*, 1 cup of commercial tomato soup credits as **¼ cup of "additional" vegetables**. Tomato soup cannot credit toward the red/orange subgroup unless the manufacturer supplies a PFS with the appropriate crediting information.

RESOURCES

Child Nutrition (CN) Labeling: http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/nslp/crediting/CN_labeling.pdf

Crediting Foods (CSDE Web Page): http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=333796

Food Buying Guide for School Meal Programs: http://www.fns.usda.gov/tn/food-buying-guide-school-meal-programs

Meal Patterns (CSDE Web Page): http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=333770

Menu Planning Guide for School Meals: http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/cwp/view.asp?a=2626&q=334320

Product Formulation Statements: http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/nslp/crediting/PFS.pdf

USDA Product Formulation Statement for Vegetables and Fruits: http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/PFSfv.pdf

USDA Sample Product Formulation Statement for Vegetables:
http://www.fns.usda.gov/sites/default/files/PFSsamplevegetables.pdf

Vegetable Subgroups: http://www.sde.ct.gov/sde/lib/sde/pdf/deps/nutrition/nslp/vegetable_groups.pdf

For more information, see the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) *Menu Planning Guide for School Meals* and Meal Patterns and Crediting Foods Web pages or contact the school nutrition programs staff in the CSDE Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education, 25 Industrial Park Road, Middletown, CT 06457.